

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) today announced that Walker's Point Youth and Family Center will receive \$147,853 to continue their Basic Center program, focused on serving Milwaukee area teens and families. Since 1976, this project has provided temporary emergency shelter to young people who are homeless, runaways, or otherwise in crisis and provided services to empower youth, help them to resolve personal and family problems, strengthen family relationships, and support safe and stable homes.

"Centers like Walker's Point are essential to ensuring that youth who find themselves in difficult situations have someplace to seek care, and that families going through hard, emotional times have some hope of being reunited," Congresswoman Moore said. "Whether they are homeless, runaways, or experiencing some other type of crisis, it's important that Milwaukee's youth have someplace to stay besides the street – someplace where supportive services are offered and someone can look out for them. Without the temporary services offered by Walker's Point, many youths would certainly find themselves in very dangerous situations."

The Walker's Point Basic Center program provides 24-hour shelter, support services to young people, and 24-hour crisis counseling for individuals and families. The shelter provides programming in HIV prevention, and alcohol and drug prevention. Their aftercare program includes non-residential counseling services with the youth or the family and a six-week check-in with the ex-resident youth and parent(s) that had been involved in counseling.

Maximum stay in the shelter is two weeks, and the average stay is eight days. During this time, youth residing in the shelter receive at least five individual counseling sessions per week, and group counseling sessions are held daily. The center provides a 24-hour telephone hotline to provide crisis counseling, information, and referral services that essentially begin intake to the emergency shelter.

"We were so delighted to receive a new three year cycle of federal funding to provide these emergency shelter and crisis counseling services," said Andre Olton, Executive Director at Walker's Point. "These are especially difficult times for families with the dire economy, and family stress is a major reason that young people end up in crisis or run away from home. The good news is that through counseling most youth ending up re-uniting with their families, and in almost all other cases you leave our shelter for safe alternative homes."

During the past three-year funding cycle for the Basic Center, Walker's Point Youth and Family Center housed 223 residents and provided 47 individuals with non-resident services. Their program staff responded to more than 1,500 calls from youth and adults seeking assistance.

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